

ABSTRACT

A purge system for an optical metrology tool is disclosed. The metrology tool includes an optics plate for supporting the measurement optics. A movable stage
5 supports a wafer below the optics plate. Inert purge gas is injected between the lower surface of the optics plate and the upper surface of the wafer. The gas flow functions to stabilize and homogenize the ambient in the measurement region. The gas flow also serves to clear the measurement area of absorbing species which is particular useful for measurements using vacuum ultraviolet light.